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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Security Committee

1 5 NOV 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Compartmentation Subcommittee

FROM: Robert W. Gambino
Chairman

SUBJECT: Zero-Based Clearance Reviews

1. In April of this year, on instructions from the DCI, I had the Special Security Center, CIA (SSC/CIA), initiate a pilot program zero-based clearance review of Special Access Approvals held by one CIA contractor and one CIA component. The review required that each and every compartmented access be either rejustified or cancelled. In the contractor review, approximately one fourth of the personnel cleared were determined to have no current valid need for such approvals. In the CIA component review, it was determined that almost 10% of the personnel held approvals no longer fully justifiable. Accordingly, debriefings have been undertaken.

2. Based upon these pilot results, the DCI has decided to expand this program throughout industry and the Executive Branch. Also, his Legislative Counsel is currently conducting a review of all extant Legislative Branch approvals.

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3. The SSC will conduct reviews of industrial contractors, many of whom hold SCI contracts with a number of Intelligence Community sponsors. Contractors will be advised to provide justification for each of their clearances and the identity of their sponsor. The SSC will collect the approval justification data and forward it to the sponsoring Agency or Program Office to either confirm the need for clearance or, failing that, to ensure that debriefing is effected when not justified. The SSC role is one of coordinating a common concern problem of the Community and they will, in no way, make any determination of needs for individual access approvals.

4. The DCI desires that each NFIB Agency and Department initiate a program of zero-based clearance review for all SCI approvals held by its personnel and, in the case of CIA, a review of approvals held within non-NFIB agencies. I realize that, in the cases of some organizations, this will be an undertaking of considerable magnitude. However, since we are arriving at a period where space derived COMINT will be protected solely by the "COMINT Controls Only", in most cases this strikes me as a highly propitious time to begin this task.

5. To accomplish this task I desire that the Compartmentation Subcommittee serve as the Executive Agent for conducting a zero-based clearance review of the NFIB Agencies and Departments. In the case of Agencies and Departments not represented on your subcommittee, please work through the Security Committee member. For any machine listings required, please contact CIB/CIA for necessary support.

6. In conducting this review, management officials are to provide rationales for each individual clearance held by personnel under their jurisdiction. If entire units require the same clearances for the same reason the justification for the total group may be given and then merely provide the names of personnel in the unit who hold the approvals. These justifications should then be reviewed by appropriate Control Officers or Program Officers within your Agency or at the sponsoring Agency to validate true need. Personnel not requiring further access are to be debriefed.

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7. I desire that each member Agency or Department complete this DCI assigned review by 30 September 1979. To apprise the DCI of progress in this review, I would like periodic interim reports from each member Agency and Department reflecting the number of approvals reviewed and debriefings effected as a result of this program. These interim reports should be filed with the Executive Secretary, Security Committee on 15 February, 15 May and 1 August 1979. Your final report should be in hand by 15 October 1979.

8. In addition, I also ask that each member Agency and Department advise their contractors to provide full cooperation to the SSC/CIA review.

9. [redacted] of the Security Committee Staff will be Staff Action Officer for this review.

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Robert W. Gambino

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